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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 BERLIN 000038

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR SCA/FO (DAS GASTRIGHT), SCA/A, INL/FO (PDAS SCHWEICH), EUR, EUR/AGS, EB, S/CT, S/CRS, STATE PLEASE PASS TO USAID, ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE (FOR SR DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR MARK WARD), JOINT STAFF FOR J5/COL CICCHINELLI

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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [PTER](#) [PNAT](#) [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [ECIN](#)

MOPS, MCAP, KCRS EUN, G-8, AF, PK, GM, XD

SUBJECT: GASTRIGHT DELEGATION DISCUSSIONS IN BERLIN ON AFGHANISTAN(U)

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Classified By: POL M-C JOHN BAUMAN, FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d)

11. (C) (Summary) In an productive and timely visit, South and Central Asian Affairs Deputy Assistant Secretary John Gastright, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Schweich, USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator Mark Ward, and Joint Staff Central Asia Division Chief Col. Matthew Cicchinelli visited Berlin December 13-14 2006 to discuss a wide range of issues relating to Afghanistan with German counterparts and members of Parliament. With the upcoming dual EU and G8 Presidencies, all eyes will be on Berlin to increase its profile in Afghanistan. The visit helped give their German interlocutors a greater appreciation for the comprehensive U.S. strategy: reconstruction and infrastructure development; counter-narcotics; security and justice sector reform; and good governance. End Summary.

MFA Lays Out Presidency Goals

12. (C) In a private meeting with Ambassador Michael Koch, the MFA's Afghanistan Special Director, DAS Gastright briefed on the recent completion of an interagency Strategic Review of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan. While violence this past summer's violence was expected, its intensity was not. More time, more money, and more manpower are needed. The report finds that a comprehensive approach integrating security, governance, and development programs has been most effective in stabilizing provinces.

13. (C) Gastright noted that we hope to employ this strategy in more parts of the country and plan to ask for a major infusion of funds from Congress to do so. Gastright stressed the U.S. and EU need to raise the profile of civilian activities in Afghanistan, particularly through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). The US team welcomed the EU's plans to commit long-term to Afghanistan in the Commission's 2007-2013 budgets, at around 150 million euros per year. The U.S. wants EU member states to consider

significant bilateral pledges, as well, and hopes are high in Washington that Germany will emerge a strong leader on this front during its EU Presidency.

Multi-faceted Approach Lauded

¶4. (C) In an interagency meeting with high-level Afghan experts from the German Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Defense, and Economic Development, the delegation highlighted the full range of U.S. support offered the region and went in depth on the role of Pakistan in improving cross border problems. Participants on the German side included the MFA's Ambassador Koch; Dirk Brengelmann, NATO office director; Christof Weil, ESDP action officer; Maren Richter, Police Training action officer. From the MoD, the Division Chief for J5, Col. Jobst Schoenfeld, attended. The MoI sent Deputy Officer Director Michael Jansen and action officer Jonny Sommerfeld. Finally, the Ministry for Economic Cooperation sent its Afghanistan Director, Ralf-Matthias Mohs and two additional colleagues.

¶5. (C) Koch began by outlining upcoming meetings on Afghanistan to take place in Berlin, including an EU-Afghanistan Troika meeting January 29, a Political Directors JCMB meeting January 30, and possibly a regular JCMB meeting January 31. It was agreed that strengthening coordination in Kabul, rather than developing a new mechanism, is preferable. Koch was interested in Ward's idea of showcasing at the JCMB the work of the more successful sub-groups, in hopes this could reinvigorate those parts of the JCMB process that have less progress to show.

¶6. (C) The bottom line in Afghanistan remains our determination to help Afghanistan build a safe, economically viable and well governed country, stated DAS Gastright. Getting there is a long process and the U.S. side highlighted

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areas where we are focusing our efforts. Those include:

- (A) The role of Pakistan (and its plan for regional development in the tribal areas);
- (B) The role of good governance (a make-or-break factor in AFG's future);
- (C) Increasing infrastructure development (which puts money in the pockets of workers and is essential for those trying to get their goods to market);
- (D) Security (getting the Afghanistan security forces up to speed and ready to take on insurgents, terrorists and narco-traffickers);
- (E) Justice Sector Reform (removing corrupt officials and supporting the new Attorney General); and
- (F) Counter Narcotics (keeping the 85% of those not involved in the drug trade on our side while moving toward eradication of crops as part of the Afghan Government's comprehensive plan).

¶7. (C) German reactions were generally positive. Koch agreed that Pakistan's latest efforts were an improvement but hoped they could do more. Koch said Germany would use its G8 Presidency to urge Pakistan and Afghanistan to develop initiatives for the tribal areas along their border.

¶8. (C) The German side highlighted its "country-wide" efforts in areas like water supply, capacity building, energy sector development, education, and private sector initiatives. While many German projects continue to be focused in the north, Germany is open to assisting elsewhere, starting with a four-to-five million Euro fund for emergency development aid projects throughout the belt south of Kabul. Senior USAID DAA Ward said that power is a new focus for major infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, and Germany's expertise and support in this area is particularly timely.

¶9. (C) Col. Cicchinelli reviewed Afghan National Army

reforms, stating that the deficiencies in size, capabilities and equipment severely hinder the ANA's ability to fight insurgents and terrorists. U.S. thinking on Afghan security forces has evolved over the last five years, he said. Afghan armor, commando capabilities, vehicles and medevac support were severely limited. The U.S. supports increasing the ANA from 50,000 to 70,000 troops, which the Germans present supported. Col. Cicchinelli continued that Afghanistan needs "fully participating partners" in its effort to improve its security apparatus.

¶10. (C) In discussing police training, Germans raised concerns about a public "blame game" for continued problems in this area. Sensitive in their role as lead nation for police training, MOI representatives stated that Germany had trained 17,000 police to date, and is studying plans to increase the presence of EU trainers in Afghanistan threefold during its upcoming Presidency. Germany views its presence as a long term engagement and has focused on quality of trainees at times to the detriment of quantity. The MOI is now considering constabulary units and other multi-pillared approaches to create a force able to ensure the security of Afghan citizens.

Counter-Narcotics Efforts Raise Concerns

¶11. (C) PDAS Schweich went into detail on implementation of the Afghan government's counter-narcotics plan, highlighting the need to eradicate in areas where alternative livelihoods were available and to provide funds to governments that did more to eliminate illegal drug trade in their regions. Schweich highlighted that the GoA probably would pursue a ground-based spraying approach to eradication in 2007. Badakhshan, in the north, was the second-largest poppy-producing province. Amb. Koch made clear Germany has "grave concerns" about spraying. The German government is contemplating the things it can do in the north on the counter-narcotics front, and expects the U.S. (and the UK) to consult with Berlin on any intended eradication in

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Badakhshan. Schweich reinforced that poppy production is a crime in Afghanistan and counter-narcotics activities would be done in a way to limit alienating farmers and local communities. However, he stated, 85% of Afghans are not involved in drug trade, and this huge majority is beginning to tire as their criminal neighbors reap the profits from illicit activities.

¶12. (C) The German delegation's Mohs complained that the new Afghanistan AG arrests those involved in narco-trafficking, but within hours or days they are released. This sort of backsliding is counterproductive. Furthermore, Mohs believes interdiction rather than eradication is the key to slowing the growth of drug trade in AFG. "If we lose the hearts and minds of the farmers, we've lost the country" claimed Kohs. NOTE: In a private conversation, Kohs informed USAID SAA Ward that Germany's interagency process needs help and he hopes to open up enhanced lines of communication with the U.S. both in Afghanistan and in the capitals.

Chancellery Welcomes Information; Urges Coordination

¶13. (C) Meeting next with Deputy National Security Advisor Rolf Nikel, Gastright outlined the U.S. Government's Strategic Review of Afghanistan policy. To the review's conclusions -- that more people, money, and time were needed -- Nikel added one thing: coherence. This was important not just between civilian and military authorities active in the country, but also among international donors and the Afghan government and population. Nikel noted that about 2 billion USD is spent annually on aid to Afghanistan. Some argued that the real problem was the absorptive capacity of the Afghan Government (a view Nikel said he did not share).

Greater coordination and Afghan ownership is essential. Gastright and Ward took note of Nikel's view and outlined U.S. capacity-building efforts, from the national, provincial, and district levels.

¶14. (C) Deputy NSA Nikel asked whether reconstruction and development were the key factors for the United States. The delegation agreed, and emphasized the U.S. focus on power generation and roads. Nikel welcomed this point; Germany is active in the north and elsewhere, and is interested in projects that had visibility.

¶15. (C) Colonel Cicchinelli briefed on security sector reform in Afghanistan, especially regarding the ANA and ANP. PDAS Schweich reviewed the contents of the Inspector General report on police training, which had gotten attention in recent press articles. Schweich pointed out that the IG report, on the whole, considered the international training efforts to be well-conceived and well-executed. Nikel was particularly grateful for this information.

¶16. (C) Nikel said there is increasing confidence that an expanded EU police training mission might be within reach. It is important to keep the problems in mind at the same time -- after officials are trained, they return to "Afghan reality," including a "non-existent" judicial system, and difficulties paying wages. There was a proposal as well that the European Commission take a greater role in judicial sector reform, but this is a slow process. Any ESDP police mission has to increase the quantity of trainers -- Nikel reiterated the MOI's statement of increasing by a factor of "two, three, or more" while also improving the quality of the training. Some EU countries are already interested. Gastright said that would be a huge step and said the JCMB should also address increasing police salaries so that they are comparable with the army. A ten-year commitment would be needed.

¶17. (C) PDAS Schweich outlined counter-narcotics efforts. Nikel asked if Alternative Livelihoods (AL) programs would be in place in areas where eradication took place, which Schweich confirmed. Nikel said the "modalities" of eradication were important: Afghan authorities had to be on

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board, and they had to be sustainable (i.e., to have public support). Schweich emphasized the counter-narcotics plan was and remained an Afghan Government plan, and it was a GoA decision to carry out a more aggressive eradication program. He highlighted the role of Badakhshan in producing poppy. Nikel noted that eradication there could have an affect on the military situation and said he hoped the U.S. would consult with Germany on this.

¶18. (C) Gerd Bischof, Senior Director for Defense, asked whether genetically modified poppy could be introduced to reduce yields. Schweich said that many options had been considered and he would be glad to discuss them further on a separate visit, but that in the short term there was no alternative to spray eradication.

19 (C) Nikel called the discussion "encouraging" and highlighted the importance for Germany of mutually reinforcing civilian and military efforts, as well as a comprehensive strategy that incorporates the Afghan Government. Germany is in for the long haul.

Parliamentarians Open But Critical

¶20. (C) Following a brief for press representatives, the delegation next met with seven key members of the German Bundestag: Ruprecht Polenz (CDU-Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee), Hans-Ulrich Klose (SPD-Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee), Andreas Schockenhoff (CDU-Deputy Caucus Chairman), Walther Kolbow (SPD-Deputy

Caucus Chairman), Kerstin Mller (Greens-Caucus Spokeswoman on Foreign Affairs), Rainer Stinner (FDP-Defense Committee Member) and Bernd Siebert (CDU-Caucus Spokesman for Defense). The parliamentarians were open-minded, though somewhat critical on counter-narcotics.

¶21. (C) A number of parliamentarians said they could not be too far in front of their electorate regarding out of area military operations. They expressed concerns that additional German casualties could turn already-skeptical public opinion against German efforts in AFG. The U.S. side clarified its understanding and discussed ways forward and where the U.S. and Germany could coordinate efforts, including in Badakhshan. Fears were raised that without a more concerted effort to rebuild Afghanistan we could see the "Iraqization" of the country. DAS Gastright responded that "Afghanistan is not Iraq" to which several parliamentarians simultaneously chimed "not yet."

MOI Responds to CT and Police Training Goals

¶22. (C) Meeting with Interior Ministry Deputy DG for Police Affairs, Dr. Hans-Juergen Foerster, he said the progress report of the German fact-finding commission on the police training mission is expected the week of December 18. He added Germany hopes to expand the police training mission from the current 42 German trainers to 150-160 trainers from throughout the EU (but with Germany still the lead country). The end goal is to train 60,000 Afghan police. Foerster noted the Bundestag needs to approve the mandate for the German training mission annually, as is the case for the military deployment.

¶23. (C) As in the Nikel meeting, PDAS Schweich outlined counter-narcotics efforts. He also focused on the need to amend the training curriculum to enhance counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency capabilities as well as the importance of pay and rank reform. He cited with concern evidence of growing ties between narcotics producers/traffickers and the Taliban, noting that this was a 180-degree departure from the Taliban's policy of banning opium when in power.

¶24. (C) Foerster outlined Germany's interest in strengthening controls along Afghanistan's borders, particularly with China, since much of the chemicals needed for opium processing in Afghanistan originate in China. The German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) has been

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tasked with producing a feasibility study for a project designed to tighten border controls.

¶25. (C) Colonel Cicchinelli briefed on security sector issues and listed areas for police-training improvement, including (1) crowd control, (2) force protection, including IED removal, (3) counter-insurgency capabilities, (4) counter-narcotics capabilities, (5) rapid response capabilities and (6) beefed up border monitoring.

¶26. (C) Comment: The four U.S. Principals were well-received and provided a great deal of information to German counterparts in a short visit, eliciting requests for future meetings. With Germany wearing the dual EU/G8 Presidency hat for the coming six months, post would welcome future visits by one or more of the delegation to hone our message as Germany attempts to move the ball forward in Afghanistan. This cable has been cleared by Washington.
TIMKEN JR